

From the Land

April/1977

DEC 14 '78



Harbinger Jack-in-the-Pulpit

Emily Ford Photo

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1976 ACQUISITIONS

The Connecticut Chapter of the Nature Conservancy preserved 985 acres of land within our state in 1976 with an estimated value of \$1,200,000. Several of the acquisitions were additions to existing preserves, some were acquired and transferred to local land trusts and others ceded to the State of Connecticut.

One of the largest acquisitions, the Andover Wildlife Area, 497 acres, was transferred to the State in April, 1977 and is featured elsewhere in this issue.

In rough, chronological order of acquisitions:

- Chadbourne addition — Rockspring Wildlife Area — 85 acres.
- Cone Property — Waterford Land Trust — 60 acres.
- Conklin Easement — addition to Burnham Brook Preserve — 10 acres.
- St. John's Ledges — 132 acres.
- Kent Falls — transfer to State — 15 acres.
- Appalachian Trail Easement — 6 miles, about 25 acres.
- George Leary Preserve — addition to the Weir-Slaughter Preserve — 16 acres.
- Washburn Property — transfer to the Branford Land Trust — 18 acres.
- Preston Property — transfer to Joshua Land Trust — 97 acres.
- Stanley Cooper Addition — to the Lord's Cove Preserve — 14 acres.
- Leighton and Bressler additions — transfer to Sleeping Giant State Park — 8 acres.
- Andover Wildlife Area — Bishops' Lake transfer to State — 497 acres.
- Anna White Preserve — addition to the Weir Preserve — 8 acres.

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EVAN GRISWOLD NAMED ACTING DIRECTOR; SUSAN COOLEY TO STEWARDSHIP DIRECTOR

Evan S. Griswold and Susan D. Cooley have been appointed to the positions of Acting (Executive) Director and Director of Stewardship, respectively, for the Chapter following the resignations of Charles Scott and Arthur Weissman early in the year.

Evan Griswold had held the title of Acquisition Director with the Chapter. He is a graduate of the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies, Colorado College and Hotchkiss and is a native of Old Lyme and Greenwich. He had previously worked with The Nature Conservancy as a student intern mapping and inventorying coastal marsh preserves.

Susan Cooley, a native of Cornwall, also is a Yale School of Forestry graduate but attended the University of Colorado, Boulder. She had, prior to being captured by the Connecticut Chapter, been in research for the Ecosystems Center, Marine Biological Laboratory in Woods Hole.

Susan has been executive secretary of the Housatonic Valley Association, worked in the Peace Corps as a volunteer (in North Africa) and training teacher (Minnesota and Morocco) and had worked on projects for The Nature Conservancy in San Francisco (oil spill) and in Connecticut (Yale class project).

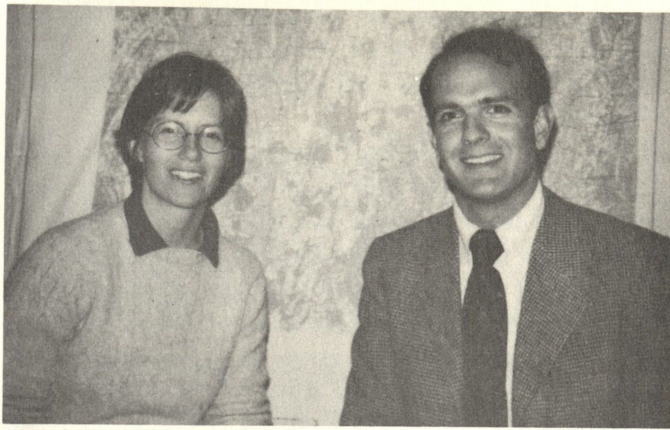
SCOTT, WEISSMAN RESIGN FROM CONNECTICUT CHAPTER

Charles L. Scott II, former executive director and Arthur Weissman, former assistant director, have resigned from the Connecticut Chapter. Their resignations were formally accepted with real regret by the Trustees at the March 7, 1977 meeting of the Board.

Scotty had fired up the Chapter for four years, inspiring members, volunteers, management committees and trustees to lead the country in preservation projects and innovative conservation techniques. He will not be lost to the Chapter. He has moved to the Conservancy's national office in Arlington to head up development.

Art Weissman joined the Connecticut Chapter in the spring of 1975 to run the summer Intern Program and to become assistant director and stewardship director. After 18 very successful months in these positions, he was offered a fellowship at Johns Hopkins to work toward his Ph.D., and could not afford to turn it down.

Both men left their positions in apple pie order.



Susan Cooley, dir. of stewardship; Evan Griswold, acting dir.

ANDOVER WILDLIFE AREA TRANSFERRED TO STATE

The Nature Conservancy, Connecticut Chapter announced Wednesday, March 30, the successful completion of the transfer of the 497 acre Bishops Lake property in Andover, Connecticut to the State of Connecticut. The property had been acquired by the Conservancy at the request of Governor Grasso who asked the organization's assistance on the project. The chapter negotiated for and purchased the extensive wetland property in two and one-half weeks, meeting a critical deadline set by the owner. The land carries an appraised value of \$435,000. The Nature Conservancy purchased it at a bargain sale price of \$328,500 from Robert Fuller, formerly of Andover, and on Wednesday transferred it to the State for the bargain sale price.

The Conservancy has held the land since December and sold it at cost to the State for a wildlife management area. In her request for assistance, Governor Grasso stated that this repurchase from the Conservancy would take place by March 31, 1977. The interim ownership by the private conservation group allowed the State to complete its own paperwork. The acquisition of Bishops Lake was accomplished through the generosity of Mr. Fuller who donated 25% of the value of the property to the State. Through this "bargain sale" approach, the State is able to generate federal funds allocated for the acquisition of open space, recreational lands and wildlife management areas.

Of the 497 acres about 293 acres are forested with 40-50 year old hardwoods. About 85 acres are in an open field condition with the remaining acreage being the Bishops Lake. Many geese, ducks and a pair of great blue heron nest on the property. Deer and other wildlife are abundant and common sights in the area. Bishops Lake has four brooks flowing into it. The wooded terrain is gently sloping and there are two small islands in the lake.

CHAPTER SCIENCE COMMITTEE

Early last year the Trustees authorized the creation of a volunteer committee to direct scientific activities of the Connecticut Chapter. Around mid-year the committee was formed under the existing Chapter Preserve Management Committee, and since then it has been meeting regularly and actively fulfilling its responsibilities.

The Science and Acquisition Referral Subcommittee, as this group is lengthily called, has been working in two areas: 1) the development of a priority system for acquisition of land, based on those elements and habitat types most in need of preservation; and 2) evaluation of the ecological value of potential gifts of land.

The group is composed of some of the most accomplished scientists in the state. The Chairman is Dr. Richard Goodwin, who serves the parent committee in this role, and is also Vice Chairman of the Connecticut Chapter and a member of the Board of Governors. He is recently retired from Connecticut College as Professor of Botany.

Dr. Thomas Siccama, who is also a Chapter trustee, serves on the Subcommittee as a plant ecologist. Dr. William Niering, Professor of Botany at Connecticut College, and Joseph Dowhan, staff biologist of the State National Resources Center (of the Department of Environmental Protection) also provide expertise in this area. Professor Steven Collins of Southern Connecticut State College serves as advisor in the area of animal ecology.

Dr. Joe Webb Peoples, Professor Emeritus at Wesleyan University, is the geologist in the science group. Finally, Mrs. Harvey (Ann) Gaylord serves as secretary to the Subcommittee.

The group's major work at present is in the area of natural area identification. The Conservancy's accelerated activity in the past few years has made it necessary to identify those natural elements and habitats that are critically in need of protection. These aspects of "natural diversity" are then ranked in order of priority and their protection is sought through one of several means — outright acquisition, easement, life estate, etc.

The Subcommittee has been using the Connecticut Natural Areas Inventory as a basis for this work, as well as a list of critical habitats and rare and endangered species compiled by Dowhan. Using certain methodologies from the Conservancy's Heritage Program, the group plans to have a specific list of protection priorities completed in the next few months. The challenge then will be to see that these specific areas are protected, but the Conservancy has *some* experience in such matters.

LAND TRUST SERVICE BUREAU

"If this is Thursday . . . It must be Simsbury"

A year ago I undertook a state-wide study of local land trusts through the Connecticut Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. We felt that the 60-some trusts in Connecticut shared our goal of keeping the state clean and green by encouraging gifts of land. Trusts often make TNC the recipient of their holdings in reverter deeds and, so, it is clearly in the Conservancy's interest to work closely with local trusts.

We had an idea that a Land Trust Service Bureau might be funded if a need for this could be demonstrated. My task was to visit trusts (at their invitation) and report back on the feasibility of such a Bureau.

I soon realized that the trusts believed, quite understandably, that I was the Service Bureau. They didn't want to discuss the possibility of help. They wanted help right then and there.

In my travels, criss-crossing the State, often on icy roads, usually late at night, sometimes well fortified by a fine country dinner provided by my hosts, I would speak to groups ranging from only one or two determined volunteers to meetings that packed them in.

I found there were certain problems common to land trusts, problems of building membership, acquiring land, raising money, filing with the IRS, putting together brochures, dealing with the assessor.

No question about it. Land trusts need professional advice on coping with these problems. They need good models to follow, case histories which will inspire them and reassure them that they aren't the only land trust to grapple with the necessary paperwork.

The Chapter sent out a mailing last year to all trusts with three enclosures we felt were important and useful documents. One was a brochure on easements, another a letter aimed at helping trusts secure for themselves the ten percent open-space set aside in subdivisions and the third was a booklet entitled "Protecting Nature's Estate" which outlines acquisition techniques and the operating procedures of the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation in government land acquisitions. This material was gratefully received by the trusts. We can think of other documents they should have and we hope to send them this year.

We plan to run a workshop on land acquisition on techniques aimed at training land trust members. Trusts need to communicate with one another, trade experiences, learn from past mistakes or triumphs. (See May 7, 1977 workshop notice in this issue.)

I'd like to see a Land Trust Workbook begun which would be sent to every trust in the State. This Workbook would

contain documents and procedures we believe are vital to effective trust management. As we acquire new ones, or decide on revisions, they would be forwarded for inclusion in the Workbook.

Land trusts are never static organizations. Their trustees move on and are replaced by new volunteers. The local government changes and gives support (or not) to the trust. We would like to see some measure of continuity, provided by The Nature Conservancy, to insure that land trusts serve the State effectively in the years ahead. Whether it will be a Land Trust Bureau or some other servicing measure depends on funds. The interest is there. The need is there. And, my full report to be made this spring will outline some of our options.

Mary Anne Guitar



ACQUISITION WORKSHOP TO BE HELD AT CHAPTER

The Chapter is sponsoring a Land Acquisition Workshop to be held on May 7, 1977 in the Auditorium of the Science Tower, Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT. Registration is at 9:30 A.M.

The workshop is designed to promote participation with heavy emphasis on exchange of acquisition techniques. Conservancy members, Preserve Management Committees, members of local land trusts and conservation commissioners — all — are invited.

Discussion leaders will include: John Payne of the national Nature Conservancy office; Peter Neal, Branford Land Trust; Mary Anne Guitar; Evan Griswold, Acting Director, Conn. Chapter, and a representative from the Connecticut State Acquisition Unit.

BARNETT, BARRON & LORD, INC.

The cheery voice answering the phone for the Connecticut Chapter is Lindy Barnett (Mrs.), secretary for the office since September. Lindy, a Californian, attended Modesto Junior College and Galen Medical College (Fresno) and has worked for RCA and for physicians medical group. She was also office manager for a general surgeon, which front office skill she has successfully transferred to managing the chapter office. She lives with her husband in Middletown.

Anna Barron (Mrs.), a Swedish citizen works part-time for the Conservancy as secretary to the Stewardship program. Anna, fluent in English, French, German (as well as Swedish) has been office manager, Radio Free Europe, Stockholm, a secretary in the United Nations, New York, Assistant to Director, American-Swedish News Exchange, Stockholm, secretary for Dag Hammarskjöld and private secretary for Maestro Leopold Stowkowski. Anna also makes her home in Middletown with Prof. Barron of the Wesleyan music faculty and a daughter.

Henry Lord joined the chapter staff, formally, in February, although he has been active in volunteer work since 1973. He has attended Choate School, Colorado Rocky Mountain School and Yale. (He's on a leave of absence from Yale.) Henry is the master trouble shooter for Preserve Management Committees as the Stewardship Assistant. Committees may get in line for his services by calling the chapter office.



Anna Barron and Lindy Barnett. (Henry Lord was out posting preserves)

ANNUAL MEETING OVERLOOKS GRISWOLD PT.

The Annual Meeting of The Nature Conservancy, Connecticut Chapter will be held on Saturday, May 21, 1977, at the home of John S. Griswold, Old Shore Road, Old Lyme, at 11 A.M.

Members not paying close attention to the business at hand will be able to look across the Griswold Pt. Preserve.

In the order of things: a short business meeting, a spirited (short) address, lunch (bring your own), a walk over Griswold Pt.

Members will receive further notice, with directions. Save the date.

THE NATURE CONSERVANCY ACQUIRES 97 ACRE PRESERVE

The Nature Conservancy has accepted a 97 acre donation of land from Mrs. Ellen D. Preston of Hampton. The property is to be established as a nature preserve in perpetuity and is to be used for scientific and educational purposes.

An outstanding feature of the property is its 3/4 mile river frontage on both sides of the Little River. The property lies several miles north of another Nature Conservancy preserve known as the Rock Spring Wildlife Refuge along the Little River in Scotland. Mrs. Preston's gift will be named the H. E. Preston Nature Sanctuary, after her late husband.

The Sanctuary is mostly wooded, and has a range of habitats from dry upland forests to flood-plain thickets. The western section contains the Little River and three of its tributary streams. Near the Little River yellow birch becomes locally dominant and hydrophytic plants like skunk cabbage occur in drainageways and depressions. The abundance of water suggests that the habitat is conducive to a variety of woodland birds and mammals, including hawks, deer and fox. The land bordering this property on the west is open farmland, thus creating a valuable edge effect for wildlife.

Through its program of working with local land Trusts in Connecticut, The Nature Conservancy with the donor's endorsement, will pass the property on to the Joshua's Tract Conservation and Historic Trust. The deed to the local Trust will contain natural area restrictions and reverts to The Nature Conservancy. The Joshua's Trust is a regional land trust active in the towns of Windham, Mansfield, Chaplin, Scotland and Hampton.

FOREST RESERVES IN SLOVENIA, YUGOSLAVIA

Slovenia, just a few squares miles larger than New Jersey, is the westernmost of the six Yugoslav republics. Bordering on Hungary, Austria, Italy and the Adriatic sea, it represents a territory where east and west, north and south meet — not only in the cultural but also in the geographical and climatic sense.

Blending of alpine, mediterranean and continental influences on top of the rather complicated geological structure of the country, resulted in an incredible variety of biotops which call for protection, especially in view of the relatively rapid development of the country in the recent years.

The idea of preserving some of our natural heritage is by no means new: large forest owners started to set aside smaller forest reserves just about a hundred years ago. Today these very reserves are the core of our existing primeval forests representing a natural heritage of European significance.

Unfortunately the above mentioned reserves do not nearly represent the variety of our forest vegetation: in the spirit of the time spectacular and rare was preserved rather than representative and typical. Some of these areas were even set aside only as hunting reserves.

Spurred by a late echo of the IBP, the School of Forestry at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, started a broad action funded by the Slovenian Forestry Institute and by the Slovenian Research Community in order to create a network of forest reserves representing the richness of our forest heritage.

A forest reserve has been defined as "... a part of forest land or potential forest land which is systematically left to undisturbed natural development and represents a given typical or exceptional forest biotic community with its entire environment."

In Slovenia there are well over 60 major forest plant communities representing various ecological conditions — from the Mediterranean coast to the Alpine timberline. Our goal has been to have each of them represented in this network by at least three reserves.

A forest plant community map in the scale 1: 50,000 exists for all of Slovenia and a third of it has been mapped also in the scale 1:10,000. These maps (in addition to our personal knowledge of individual areas) served as means of finding reserves representing individual plant communities.

It may be mentioned that not an acre included into the reserve network has been purchased or set aside by a governmental decree: rather we worked closely with the 17 forest management organizations that manage the third of Slovenian forests which are in public ownership. The re-



maining two-thirds are in private hands and have not been considered at all.

It should be stressed that the majority of the organizations set aside significant portions of their forest land — in spite of the fact that this could directly affect their earnings: they realized the significance of the reserves for the silvicultural (as well as other) research and they are even willing to continue to equip the reserves, to supervise them as well as to participate in the research projects. So far approximately 240 reserves have been selected, ranging in area from 3 to 1300 acres, amounting to well over 12,000 acres or approximately .5 percent of the entire forest area in Slovenia.

The legal aspects of protection are in the process of being settled in accordance with the 1970 Nature Protection Act, rather than by the 1974 Forestry Act which in fact would offer the same degree of protection: we have been fully aware all this time that although forests are virtually the only existing natural ecosystems in Slovenia, a comprehensive network of reserves will sooner or later have to include some non-forest ecosystems as well, which could not be covered by the Forestry Act.

The first phase of the project "The New Forest Reserves" is coming to an end. But we hope that the project will not terminate. In the years to come the activities related to the reserves will be following two main lines: completion and consolidation of the network itself and beginning of long-term ecological research. Even if the progress along the latter line will not be immediately as spectacular as one would desire, we hope that something has been accomplished: we have the reserves — for ourselves and for the generations to come.

Ljubljana, October 1976

Bostjan Anko
Rozna Dolina X/16
Ljubljana
Jugoslavia 31.000

EVENING ON THE SALT MARSH

A clear piping whistle sounds out of the half-light of dusk as two yellow-legs swiftly maneuver in over the salt meadow grass to the mud flats beyond. Quickly they land and take up feeding among the half dozen or so black ducks and a solitary Black-capped night heron. White egrets seem luminous against the darkening banks of the marsh creeks. They stand as though transfixed, waiting for the moment when a small fish or crab will swim within reach of their dagger bills.

My paddle rests in the water, trailing a multi-colored wake in the red, blue and grey of the late summer evening. It is now too dark to pick out more than silhouettes with my field glasses, so I merely rest and listen to the faint spattering noises of the Black ducks as they sieve through the mud with their bills. Here and there are small splashings of bait fish chased by bluefish and bass on the incoming tide. This is evening on the salt marsh.

By the end of August, 1975, I had spent three full months in and around the marshes of the Lower Connecticut River, collecting data on the vegetation, geology, soils and use of this precious little remaining area of marsh. Under the Student Internship Program (S.I.P.) of The Nature Conservancy, Connecticut Chapter, I was able to make an intensive study of three tidal wetland areas: Lord's Cove in Lyme, Griswold Point, a sand spit in Old Lyme, and Pottagansett Marsh Preserve near Black Point in East Lyme. Similar studies under the S.I.P. were being carried out on eight other preserves throughout the state, to provide ecological baseline information to aid in the proper management of these preserves by the volunteer Stewardship Committees. The program proved successful enough that it has been expanded and continued through 1977.

The sand spit at Griswold Point proved the key to the natural history of the salt marshes behind it. Without the protection of this barrier of sand, the marsh would quickly begin to erode away under the gnawing waves. With the marsh would also go the myriad of fish, shellfish, crabs,

birds, mammals and insects that compose the interlocking web of life in this ecosystem. In fact, without the sand spit, the marsh could not have formed at all.

The natural history of the marsh goes back to the time of the melting glaciers, 10 to 15 thousand years ago. As the glacier melted, huge deposits of sediments were washed down from the scraped uplands to form shallow estuaries at the River's mouth. In these quiet waters, marsh plants took hold, trapped more sediment and began to build a thick carpet of marsh peat. Associated with these areas came all the animals that we now find in the marsh. As the plants and animals lived, grew and died, their bodies became part of a rich organic soup that is flushed from the marsh by every tide. This soup enriches the fishing grounds of the Continental shelf as well as the shallow coastal bays and harbors.

Ecologists know of no other natural areas that are as productive as these coastal wetlands. Without the benefit of thousands of tons of fertilizer, these marshes may come close to rivaling the per acre production of some mid-west cornfields. Because of this richness, many species of fish spend part or all of their lives in the marsh. Some of these are commercially important, such as herrings, bluefish, crabs, shrimp and others.

Beyond the production of fish, the marsh provides other services to man. They provide areas of recreation, flood control, open space and the protection of many species of birds and other animals. These are all provided free of charge, without the outlay of tax dollars.

In a world more and more crowded with geometric and artificial landscapes, our marshes provide a welcome respite to the eye. They serve as lovely open spaces and contrasts to the dense second growth forests of our uplands. They provide variety in an increasingly monotonous landscape of highway-strip joints and rows of summer tract homes running along our shores.

Yet there are those that would contrive to destroy our marshes to build new homes, highways, factories and marinas. Each year, more marshland is nibbled away, never to return. By providing the opportunity to study these areas, The Nature Conservancy is helping to gather important information that will help to provide better understanding and hopefully better management of the marshes it holds. The Conservancy hopes to build up a large enough base of information to begin to help others with the protection of marshlands and other natural areas. Hopefully, through The Nature Conservancy's efforts, our great grandchildren, in 2077, will know the deep thrill of the call of the yellowlegs settling with the evening over the salt marsh.

Evan Griswold
Acting Director

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Red Trail, Lucius Pond Ordway Preserve, Devil's Den

DEVIL'S DEN PRESERVE OFFERS COURSE

The Devil's Den Preserve of The Nature Conservancy, in cooperation with Fairfield University, is offering an ecological study starting Saturday, April 2, 1977 and sessions will be held every Saturday from 9:00-12:00 A.M. through Saturday, June 18, 1977 at the Preserve.

Clifford E. Emanuelson, Director of the Preserve, will conduct the course and coordinate efforts of resource personnel.

The course will cover the history, development and use of the Preserve. The establishment and development of materials for use on a Preserve, preparation for classroom use of the Preserve and carry-over educational activities designed to correlate the field experience with the remainder of the school year. Field exploration and discoveries with resource staff who have helped create this unique scientific and aesthetic study area for environmental studies will be conducted.

Academic or auditing credit for 3, 2 or 1 credit can be arranged.

Contact:

June Gould — Environmental Studies Chairman, Teachers' Center at Fairfield, Inc., 309 Barberry Road, Southport, Connecticut 06490.

Clifford E. Emanuelson, Director, Devil's Den, Preserve of The Nature Conservancy, Box 1162, Weston, Connecticut 06883.

CONSERVANCY HEAD TO SPEAK AT HOUSATONIC VALLEY

Patrick F. Noonan, President of the Nature Conservancy will be the principal speaker at a public meeting of the Housatonic Valley Association on April 29, at the parish house of St. John's Church, Salisbury.

Mr. Noonan will discuss the Land Conservation challenge before Connecticut and the nation.

The talk, beginning at 8 P.M., will be preceded by a pot-luck supper at 6:30 P.M. Persons wishing to attend are requested to notify HVA at 927-4088 or write HVA, Rt. 7, Kent, CT 06757. There is no charge, but each diner is requested to bring a salad, casserole or dessert.

1977 Student Intern/Program Funding

For the third year in a row, more than a dozen student interns will be inventorying, mapping, studying The Connecticut Chapter's preserves. Funding comes in part from University support, in part from Chapter funds. May we ask *your* support in this successful program? An envelope is inserted for your convenience.

Susan Cooley